Exploration of Mines in Coastal Areas of A.P.

2182. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the "Indian Express" of the 27.6.1988 wherein it has been stated that according to a recent survey, Coastal Areas of A.P. and Maharashtra are laden with deposits of heavy minerals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken so far for the exploration of these minerals to meet the country's demand?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) Yes Sir. Parts of coastal stretches of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra contain heavy minerals.

(b) and (c) Atomic Minerals Division of Department of Atomic Energy has been conducting field and laboratory investigations, viz. survey, sampling and estimation of heavy minerals in the beach sands of parts of the Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra coasts. Exploration of these deposits may be taken up should the results of the above studies so warrant.

2183. [*Transferred to the 18th August, 1988*].

Illegal Mining and Smuggling of Precious Stones in Orissa

2184. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the unchecked illegal mining and smuggling of precious and semi-precious stones going on in the western districts of Orissa finding its way to national and international markets;

(b) if so, whether Government have obtained factual position in the matter from the Sate Government of Orissa; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof stating Government's reaction with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) Reports have appeared about illegal mining of certain precious and semi-Preaious stones in Orissa.

(b) and (c) The State Government has taken the following steps to prevent illegal mining and smuggling of precious and semi-precious stones:—

(1) A number of cases have been filed in the Courts;

(2) The District Administration including Revenue, Forest and Police Department have been instructed to enforce the measures to prevent un-authorised extraction and removal of precious and semi-precious stones;

(3) With a view to curb un-authorised and illegal mining and removal of such stones, M/s. Orissa Mining Corporation Limited (a State Government Undertaking) has been entrusted with the work of exploratory mining and recovery of precious and semi-precious stones in the western districts of Orissa,

(4) A Bill to prevent such thefts effectively has also been introduced in the Orissa Assembly.

These steps and continue vigilance in the matter will help curb the activities of illegal mining and smuggling of precious and sem-precious stones in Orissa.

Lesser Wages for Women Taken by Beedi and Cigar Workers

2185. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the commission on selfemployed women in the informal sector came to the conculusion that the beedi and cigar